

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

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FM AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2753

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

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TAGS EAIR, AS

SUBJ: CIVAIR: USER CHARGES NEGOTIATIONS

1. FINAL PLENARY SESSION OF USER CHARGES TALKS HELD FRIDAY, MAY 16. FOLLOWING SERIES OF TECHNICAL SESSIONS WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON AND THURSDAY AFTERNOON, USDEL REVIEWED ITS REASONS FOR CONCERN OVER CHARGES; CONCLUSIONS REACHED TENTATIVELY IN MONTREAL AND CONFIRMED THROUGH ANALYSIS, INSPECTION AND DISCUSSION AT PLENARY THIS WEEK, AND PROPOSED THREE OPTIONS FOR SOLUTION:

- A) THE LEVY OF COMPENSATORY CHARGE ON QANTAS UNDER U.S. LAW
- B) GOA TO REDUCE CHARGES UNDER PRESENT SYSTEM, OR
- C) GOA TO REVISE PRESENT SYSTEM.

USDEL STATED PREFERENCE AT THIS POINT FOR SECOND, BUT DID NOT RULE OUT OTHERS.

2. AUSTRALIAN REACTION WAS PREFERENCE FOR AVOIDING CONFLICTS INHERENT IN FIRST ROUTE. SECOND ROUTE INVOLVES SHIFTING COSTS TO OTHER USERS AND SUGGESTED IF INDUSTRY COULD REACH AGREEMENT ON ALLOCATION, MINISTER WOULD PROBABLY BUY IT. THIRD ROUTE SEEMED MOST APPEALING TO AUSDEL SINCE IT INVOLVED IMPROVEMENTS AND
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CHANGES ADVOCATED BY CIVIL SERVANTS TO GOVT, AND AUSDEL

SAID REPORT OF USER TALKS WOULD BE PROMPTLY SUBMITTED TO GOVT AND MAY HAVE IMPACT ON JUNE/JULY BUDGET REVIEW, WHICH COULD ALSO INVOLVE REVIEW OF 80 PER CENT COST RECOVERY OBJECTIVE.

3. USDEL RESPONDED IT WAS UNREASONABLE TO EXPECT TOTAL INDUSTRY AGREEMENT BETWEEN VARIOUS USERS (INTERNATIONAL, DOMESTIC, GENERAL AVIATION AND MILITARY), AND ALLOCATION IS UNAVOIDABLE RESPONSIBILITY OF GOVTS.

4. AT CONCLUSION, AUSTEL ARGUED IT WAS NOT AUTHORIZED AT THIS SESSION TO NEGOTIATE DIFFERENCES, BUT MERELY TO SUPPLY "INFORMATION". USDEL ARGUED NEGOTIATIONS ACTUALLY BEGAN IN MONTREAL AND CONTINUED HERE AFTER EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION. AUSDEL SUGGESTED U.S. PREFERENCE WAS FOR NEGOTIATED SOLUTION, TO WHICH USDEL REPLIED REDUCTION IN CHARGES ACHIEVED IN ANY MANNER BEST SOLUTION.

5. NO DISCUSSION AT FINAL SESSION OF NEXT STEPS, BUT APPARENTLY WILLINGNESS EXPRESSED INFORMALLY THIS WEEK BY AUSDEL FOR FURTHER ROUND OF TALKS IS STILL POSSIBLE, PERHAPS TIED TO RESULTS OF JULY BUDGET REVIEW. NO OVERT SUGGESTION MADE BY AUSDEL OF CONNECTION WITH OTHER BILATERAL AGREEMENT ISSUES, WHICH IN PRIVATE DISCUSSION YESTERDAY WERE RAISED BY PYMAN AND CHAPMAN AS ISSUES FOR LATER THIS YEAR IN SEPT-DEC TIME PERIOD.
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